

## > CH-53E SLEP/X Program

### DESCRIPTION

The CH-53E is a three-engine, long-range, heavy-lift helicopter that supports the assault support function of Marine Aviation. The CH-53E is included in the Marine Corps Aviation Implementation Plan – which describes an aviation “neck-down” strategy that reduces the types of aircraft the Marine Corps operates – through the year 2025. However, these aircraft will require an upgrade if they are to continue to meet operational demands until then. Areas of focus for this upgrade program include upgraded engines, improved main rotor

blades, improved cargo hook system, an elastomeric rotor head system, common cockpit systems, service life extension, and combat survivability features.

### OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The CH-53E SLEP/X program will allow CH-53s to continue in their assault-support role by improving the aircraft’s operational capabilities and reducing life-cycle costs. Commonality between other USMC aircraft in terms of engines and avionics will greatly enhance the maintainability and deployability of the aircraft within the ACE. However, a comprehensive upgrade of the CH-53E is required in order to meet the Marine Corps’ heavy-lift and MAGTF warfighting requirements out to 2025.

### PROGRAM STATUS

An operational requirements document (ORD) is in work at MCCDC to determine the requirements of the CH-53E SLEP or replacement. An analysis of alternatives is also underway to help determine the best course for the CH-53E upgrade.



#### PROCUREMENT PROFILE:

The Procurement Profile is under development.

#### DEVELOPER/MANUFACTURER

CH-53E: Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Stratford, CT

CH-53X: TBD